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Operational Improvements Fiscal Division, Office of Comptroller

1. The following operational improvements were achieved as the result of a combined effort by members of the Comptroller's Staff (T/E), suggestions and cooperation given by the personnel of the Fiscal Division, and a representative of the Management Staff. At the beginning of the survey, it was found that some operational changes were well on their way to completion. (An outstanding example of this would be the changes in voucher processing initiated by the Comptroller's Instruction #5 completed in March 1955 and revised during the course of the survey.) The Fiscal Division recognized other problem areas but could take no immediate action due to the pressure of current routine. As stated above, many operational improvements were the result of employee observations (suggestions). The principal function of the representative of the Management Staff, being unhampered by routine duties, was to coordinate the efforts of the Division personnel and take the necessary steps to stimulate corrective action wherever advisable. Each problem was fully discussed with responsible Division officials before an operational change was initiated.
2. Exclusive of the Payroll Branch, only one change can be evaluated as of major significance, namely, the revamping of the voucher processing procedures. The principal benefits derived from this change are:
 - a. Two copies of the voucher eliminated.
 - b. Duplicate copies of contracts, vouchers, and supporting papers are no longer retained. This has saved filing space and man hours formerly needed to handle additional documents.
 - c. Both GAO site auditors and Fiscal Division now work from the same original voucher and contract files.
 - d. Through the elimination of duplicate documents, the flow of vouchers has been changed to a degree that has eliminated two operating steps.
3. Taken individually, the following operational improvements would be considered of minor importance but when combined, the total benefit to the Fiscal Division is substantial.
 - a. The problem of mis-use of form SF 147 (Combined Order-Invoice-Voucher form) by the vendor, and considerable additional work caused thereby, has been alleviated by adding to the form the following statement: "Only use this copy for invoice when billing for complete order. Use certified commercial invoice for all partial billings."

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- b. The processing of property receiving documents has been speeded up by a change in routing.
- c. Purchase documents involving the 137 accounts (property) are now pulled by the Claims Branch at time of audit, thus saving a floating delay of 10 to 30 days before the documents are returned to the file for use with other vouchers if needed.
- d. The Position Evaluation Division, Office of Personnel has revamped the Fiscal Division personnel grade structure into a more realistic picture. It should help morale and thus tend to lessen the restlessness for transfer.
- e. The register for control and assignment of Agency Voucher Numbers has been simplified thus cutting operational man hours.
- f. Vouchers in the processing mill are under tighter control.
- g. The change adopted for handling small dollar billing irregularities will save the Claims Branch man hours formerly needed to follow through on processing said discrepancies.
- h. The processing of "open market" purchase vouchers for payment has been speeded up. Payments are now made on partial billings. The Chief, Fiscal Processing Branch maintains that correspondence on this type of invoice has been cut at least 40%.
- i. A rearrangement of Branch Areas within the Fiscal Division Area will save approximately 9000 feet of personnel travel each day which in turn is reflected in gainful man hours released for other work.
- j. Complete sets of Agency Notices and Regulations are no longer maintained by the five (5) Branches.
- k. Clerical time in the Fiscal Processing Branch has been saved through the elimination of needless operations during the assembly of documents to support incoming vouchers.
- l. Although there were only a small number of outstanding "Advance Travel Funds", a successful drive was made to collect these delinquent. The situation is now current.
- m. Travel Vouchers are no longer routed to the Accounting Branch for a "funds available" clearance.
- n. Four lines of duplicate information have been eliminated from the Travel Voucher entries.
- o. The new voucher procedure has eliminated two (2) copies of the travel voucher.

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- p. Although form letters were in general use, about three form letters were added, as needed, thus cutting additional typing time.
- q. The cutting down of the use of the telephone to correct errors in submitted vouchers, to overcome delays, to seek missing documents and as a follow-up of many matters has brought greater results at less expenditure of time. Form letters are used to supplement the telephone in the majority of cases.
- r. The following operational improvements pertain solely to the Payroll Branch:
 - (1) The delay in determining surplus and missing T/A Reports was cut from approximately 2 1/2 days to 2 hours by making a "name check" only immediately on receipt of the T/A Reports into the Payroll Branch.
 - (2) By the establishment of a Central File to house T/A Reports "surplus" to one allotment but perhaps listed as "missing" from another allotment, approximately 12 man hours each pay period are saved in time consumed in locating the missing T/A Reports.
 - (3) To equalize the workload between the two weeks in the pay period cycle the T/A Form was split two ways, 1. T/A Report; 2. Change Slip. This enables the clerks to handle 70% of all personnel actions in the 2nd, or "off" payroll week, thus relieving the tension of meeting deadlines established by Machine Records Division.
 - (4) The Payroll Branch Central Index Rotary File has been cut from 5 wheels to 3. Only active Agency employees are now carried on the wheels. Reference has been speeded up.
 - (5) All Agency units habitually late in forwarding Time and Attendance Reports were contacted and requested to cooperate in meeting the payroll deadline time of 1500 on the first Monday of each pay period. The immediate response was excellent, thus increasing, by many hours, time needed in the Payroll Branch. (This problem must be constantly followed to assure continuous results.)
 - (6) Errors in Time and Attendance Reports were treated the same way and the response from operating units was equally fine.
 - (7) A work progress control for payroll allotments was set up. The purpose of this control is to pin point slow operation quickly and enable assistance to be rendered where and when needed to assure the meeting of production deadlines.
 - (8) The recent consolidation of payroll groups from 5 to 2, adopted after an employee suggestion confirming what had previously been advocated, will automatically eliminate three supervisors.

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(9) Other procedural changes were made, however, due to the temporary suspension of the survey last July, a complete evaluation of their worth was never fully established. In the near future a review of all proposed and present payroll operational procedures is to be made and, at that time, will be re-evaluated.

(10) Bonds.

(a) Payroll clerks are no longer required to make out the form necessary to have addressograph plates cut for new Savings Bond applications. The Disbursing Office now makes the plates direct from the original bond applications. The 1955 Bond Drive made this change imperative.

(b) Also, due to the heavy increase in bond deductions, the general routine of handling Savings Bond transactions had to be changed to eliminate confusion that had developed between the Payroll Branch and the Disbursing Office. The present operation is running very smoothly.

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